



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF
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NEWS RELEASE

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Statewide Youth Court Summit Convenes in Davis Tomorrow

Youths Have Alternative to Traditional Justice System

Davis—California's third annual statewide Youth Court Summit will be held from June 27–29, 2008, at the [University of California at Davis](http://www.ucdavis.edu), (UC Davis) at One Shields Avenue, Davis, California.

Participants will include nearly 200 youth and peer court staff, juvenile bench officers, education experts, and youth-focused associations who will share ideas and best practices about youth courts. Youth courts offer teen offenders an alternative to the traditional juvenile justice system. The summit is open to the news media.

The event is sponsored by the Administrative Office of the Courts' Center for Families, Children & the Courts in partnership with the California Office of Traffic Safety, the California Association of Youth Courts, and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

The summit will begin at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, June 27, with a dinner program at UC Davis's [Freeborn Hall](http://www.ucdavis.edu). The keynote speech will be delivered by former gang member Richard Santana, who was the third generation of his family to join one of California's largest gangs. Santana transformed his life through education, positive leadership experiences, and community programs, with the help of teachers. He will touch on topics such as diversity, gangs, peer pressure, prevention strategies, and motivation.

This year's theme is "Civics in Action" and will include the following workshops on Saturday, June 28:

- Real DUI Courts in Schools
- Social Justice in the Criminal Justice System
- Gangs—What the Homies Won't Talk About
- Everything You Wanted to Know About Youth Courts But Were Afraid to Ask

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The summit will conclude with a tour of the state Capitol.

About Youth Court

Youth court, a collaborative justice court model, offers an alternative to the traditional justice. Also called peer, student, or teen court, this court model provides real consequences for first-time offenders and involves teen volunteers and former defendants in the court process.

The youth charged with an offense opts to forgo the formal procedures of the juvenile court and agrees to a sentencing forum with a jury of his or her peers—other teens who have been trained to assume justice system roles, including those of attorneys, court staff, and jurors, who determine penalties

According to the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, more than 1,400 youth courts exist nationwide and more than 50 are currently operation in California.

For more information: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/collab/peeryouth.htm

News media interested in attending the Youth Court Summit should call Daisy Yee, Media Assistant, at 415-865-8929, or Donna Strobel, Court Services Analyst, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, at 415-865-8024.

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